DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 240 577 CS 208 120

TITLE	The English Composition and Literature Examinations of the College Board, 1980-82.
INSTITUTION	College Entrance Examination Board, New York, N.Y.; Educational Testing Service, Princeton, N.J.
PUB DATE	80
NOTE	15p.; Best copy available.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Achievement Tests; *College Entrance Examinations; Higher Education; *Language Usage; *Literature Appreciation; Program Evaluation; Secondary Education; Standardized Tests; Student Placement; Teacher Role; Test Format; *Testing Programs; Test Items; Test Reviews; Writing (Composition); *Writing Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS	*College Board Achievement Tests

ABSTRACT

Intended as a guide for college and secondary school educators involved in establishing institutional policy or providing students with academic counseling, this booklet presents basic information about the wide variety of English composition and literature examinations offered by College Board programs. It begins with a description of the role played by school and college English teachers in keeping College Board examinations consonant with the state of the field, and then briefly describes each composition and literature examination. Finally, the booklet discusses the similarities and differences among the examinations. A series of tables provides information on the coverage, format, place and frequency of administration for each examination; describes the content specifications for the multiple choice questions of the literature examinations; and presents comparative measurement characteristics of the examinations. (MM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED240577

The English Composition and Literature Examinations of the College Board 1980-82

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

Basic information about the wide variety of English composition and literature examinations offered by College Board programs is assembled in this booklet. This information will be helpful to college and secondary school teachers, academic administrators, testing personnel, guidance counselors, and others involved in establishing institutional policy or counseling students about which examinations are suitable to their plans and preparation. Certain subject matter examinations are available for local administration at colleges through Multiple Assessment Programs and Services (MAPS) of the College Board.

Each college or university determines which examinations are appropriate and what level of performance an individual must demonstrate for admission, placement, exemption, or credit. Through its regional offices, the College Board helps institutions develop policies and practices appropriate to their needs. Specific advice is provided in the pamphlet *Guidelines on the Uses of College Board Test Scores and Related Data.**

All of the examinations are measures of student achievement, and their validity rests on close ties to accepted curricular objectives and practices. Consequently, this booklet begins with a description of the role played by school and college English teachers in keeping College Board examinations consonant with the state of the field. Next, each composition and literature examination is briefly described within the context of the program through which it is offered. Finally, the similarities and differences among the examinations are discussed. Table 1 (pages 2 and 3) lists the examinations by program, refers you to the page of this booklet on which you will find the test discussed, and provides information about the coverage, format, and time and place of administration for each examination. Table 2 (page 7) provides the content specifications for the multiple-choice questions of the literature examinations. Table 3 (page 13) provides the measurement characteristics of the examinations (score scale, mean, standard deviation, reliability, standard error of measurement, and percentage completing 75 percent of the test).

*The order form on page 15 gives further information on obtaining *Guidelines* and other publications relating to the English composition and literature examinations of the College Board.

*Order form is not available with this document.

Faculty Involvement

College and secondary school faculty members actively teaching English play a major role in College Board programs. The Advisory Committee on English advises the Board on policies affecting the nature of the examinations as well as their appropriate use. In addition, the committee seeks opportunities to meet with other members of the English teaching profession to discuss current problems in the field and the ways in which testing activities relate to instructional practices. Members of the Advisory Committee are listed on page 14 of this booklet.

Detailed decisions about the content and format of the examinations are made by English teachers who serve on Development Committees. Members of these committees, often assisted by other English teachers, are responsible for writing most of the test questions which appear in experimental and final forms of the examinations. In addition to reviewing each other's questions by correspondence, committee members meet once or twice a year with test development specialists from Educational Testing Service (ETS) to select questions for examinations and to make final revisions of these questions. An integral part of the meetings is the discussion of current content and statistical specifications. Also discussed are possible future changes in light of previous candidate performance, evolving curriculums, and suggestions received from teachers. Members of the Development Committees are listed in the respective program publications shown on the order form on page 15.

The following examinations include essay sections, the responses to which are scored in a central location by English teachers: the Admissions Testing Program (ATP) Achievement Test in English Composition (the edition that includes an essay), both of the Advanced Placement (AP) Program Examinations in English, and the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) General Examination in English Composition (the edition that includes an essay). Readers for the AP and the ATP examinations are drawn from both secondary school and college English faculties. Only college English teachers are used as readers for the CLEP General Examination in English Composition.

In addition to these continuing activities, the College Board calls on English teachers to serve as consultants and members of ad hoc review panels. Through these mechanisms, English teachers provide a link between the

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
CEEB
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

This booklet was prepared and produced for the College Board by Educational Testing Service.
The College Board and ETS are dedicated to the principle of equal opportunity, and their programs, services, and employment policies are guided by that principle.

Copyright © 1981 by College Entrance Examination Board. All rights reserved.
Permission is hereby granted to any nonprofit organization or institution to reproduce this booklet in limited quantities for its own use but not for sale, provided that the copyright notice of the College Entrance Examination Board appears in all reproduced copies.

CS 208 120

TABLE 1

THE ENGLISH EXAMINATIONS OF THE COLLEGE BOARD

	Coverage	Format	Administration (When and Where Given)
ATP Achievement Test			
in English Composition (See page 4.)	Skills in using standard written English in expository writing	60 minutes: 90-95 multiple-choice questions or 60 minutes: 70 multiple-choice questions (40 minutes) 1 essay question (20 minutes)	Four times a year at ATP Test Centers Once a year in December at ATP Test Centers
in Literature (See page 4.)	Skills developed in secondary school literature courses	60 minutes: about 60 multiple-choice questions	Five times a year at ATP Test Centers
ATP Test of Standard Written English (See page 5.)	Skills in using standard written English	30 minutes: 50 multiple-choice questions	Six times a year at ATP Test Centers
AP Examination in English Composition and Literature (See page 5.)	College-level work in introductory English courses, the study of literature and the writing of critical, expository essays	60 minutes: about 50 multiple-choice questions 120 minutes: 3 or 4 required essays	Once a year in May at AP Participating Schools
Language and Composition (See page 6.)	College-level work in introductory English courses; in the study of language and rhetoric and training in expository writing	60 minutes: about 50 multiple-choice questions 120 minutes: 3 or 4 required essays	
CLEP General Examination in English Composition (See page 6.)	Skills in expository writing assumed to be acquired in college-level introductory composition courses	90 minutes: 120-130 multiple-choice questions or 90 minutes: 60-65 multiple-choice questions (45 minutes) 1 essay question (45 minutes)	At CLEP Test Centers (See *CLEP Registration Guide* for schedule.)

TABLE 1 (continued)

	Coverage	Format	Administration (When and Where Given)
CLEP Subject Examination			
in American Literature* (See page 6.)	One-year introductory college survey course in American literature	90 minutes: about 110 multiple-choice questions 90 minutes: optional essay section	
in Analysis and Interpretation of Literature (See page 7.)	One-year undergraduate course in literary analysis	90 minutes: about 100 multiple-choice questions 90 minutes: optional essay section	At CLEP Test Centers (See *CLEP Registration Guide* for schedule.)
in College Composition (See page 8.)	One-year college course in composition and rhetoric	90 minutes: 100 multiple-choice questions 90 minutes: optional essay section	
in English Literature (See page 8.)	One-year introductory college survey course in English literature	90 minutes: about 105 multiple-choice questions 90 minutes: optional essay section	
in Freshman English (See page 8.)	One-year introductory college course in composition and language and reading skills	90 minutes: 100 multiple-choice questions 90 minutes: optional essay section	
Comparative Guidance and Placement Program Sentences Test (See page 9.)	Skills in using standard written English	25 minutes: 40 multiple-choice questions	By the institution at its convenience
Descriptive Tests of Language Skills (See page 9.)			By the institution at its convenience
Usage (See page 10.)	Familiarity with standard written English	30 minutes: 40 multiple-choice questions	
Sentence Structure (See page 10.)	Knowledge of the parts of a sentence and of how these parts are put together	30 minutes: 35 multiple-choice questions	
Logical Relationships (See page 10.)	Ability to relate ideas logically	30 minutes: 50 multiple-choice questions	

*This examination will be replaced beginning January 1981 by two examinations, each based on a one-semester course.

programs, services, and examinations of the College Board and the changing practices, curriculums, and standards of American education in the areas of language, composition, and literature.

The Programs and the Examinations

Admissions Testing Program

The Admissions Testing Program provides tests and services designed to assist students, high schools, colleges, universities, and scholarship agencies with postsecondary educational planning and decision making. The ATP includes the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the Test of Standard Written English (TSWE), and 15 Achievement Tests in various academic fields. The SAT scores are intended to supplement the secondary school record and other information about the student in deciding competence for college work. The TSWE scores are meant to help place the student in an appropriate freshman English course and are not meant to be used in making admissions decisions. The results of the Achievement Tests are used by colleges both for making admissions decisions and for placement.

Three ATP tests are of particular interest to English teachers: the Achievement Test in English Composition, the Achievement Test in Literature, and the Test of Standard Written English. The College Board makes ATP Summary Reports and the Validity Study Service available on request to individual institutions that wish to study the relationship of any of these examinations to the placement decisions and grading practices of their English department.

Achievement Test in English Composition

This examination measures the ability to express ideas effectively in standard written English (see Glossary on page 14), to recognize faults in usage and structure, and to use language with sensitivity to tone and meaning. Four types of multiple-choice questions are used to test similar kinds of writing problems, but each works in a different way, measuring different skills. The questions do not test spelling or capitalization, and only a few deal with problems relating to punctuation.

Each question presents a problem to be solved or a revision to be made in the context of a particular sentence. The questions examine a student's understanding of the relationship between ideas in a sentence, awareness of the appropriateness of a particular word in a particular context, sensitivity to wordiness and ambiguity, and knowledge of the idiom and structure of standard written English.

The fundamental research that supports the use of the kinds of multiple-choice questions included in the Achievement Test in English Composition is reported in *The Measurement of Writing Ability*, by Fred I. Godshalk, Frances Swineford, and William Coffman. Their research, a carefully structured and stringently monitored study, used the actual writing of secondary school students as the criterion of writing ability against which other measures were validated. The results of the study confirm the following: that highly reliable scoring of essays can be attained by means of tightly controlled procedures; that some type of multiple-choice questions are valid as predictors of students' writing ability; and that, given a limited testing time, the combination of multiple-choice questions and an essay will produce the most valid measure of writing skill.

The edition of the examination that is administered once a year in December has 40 minutes of multiple-choice questions and a 20-minute essay question. For both the all multiple-choice edition of the test and the edition with essay, scores are reported on the 200-to-800 scale. Separate subscores are not reported for the multiple-choice or essay components of the December test. College admissions officers and high school counselors can compare scores on the two editions directly and use them interchangeably. (EN) on the score report indicates that the student took the all multiple-choice test. (ES) on the score report indicates that the student took the test with essay. For this edition, the contribution to the total score of the essay and multiple-choice sections is weighted according to the testing time allowed the students — one-third for the essay, two-thirds for the multiple-choice section.

Both editions of this examination are intended to provide information about a student's level of preparedness for college work. In conjunction with other relevant information, such as scores on other Achievement Tests and on the SAT, high school grades, and class rank, scores on the Achievement Test in English Composition can help predict the probability of academic success in the freshman year of college.

This test also has proved useful for placement purposes at those colleges where the expository writing skills it measures correspond to what is taught in the college's freshman English course.

Achievement Test in Literature

This examination measures the student's ability to read literature carefully and sensitively. The test is not one of factual recall nor does it reflect the material taught in any particular type of literature course. No reading list is prescribed; students are not expected to have read or studied any of the passages used on the examination. The best preparation is to have read widely, critically, and perceptively in a variety of historical periods and literary genres.

All the questions are based on passages of poetry, prose, and drama provided in the test. Most passages are accompanied by 8 or 9 questions, but some have as few as 4 or as many as 12. Because the examination draws from literature written in English from the Renaissance to the present, it usually has slightly more passages from English literature than from American. Approximately

equal use is made of literature from the Renaissance and seventeenth century, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the modern period. Passages from the literature of other cultures, provided that the work was originally composed in English, not translated, may also be used on the test. Materials not traditionally thought of as literature, such as jokes and cartoons, are occasionally presented for analysis.

Like the Achievement Test in English Composition, the examination is intended to provide information about a student's ability to do college-level work. In conjunction with other relevant information, the results of the test can be useful both in admissions decisions and in placing students into appropriate literature courses.

Test of Standard Written English

The TSWE measures the ability to express ideas correctly and effectively in standard written English. Two basic types of multiple-choice questions are used. One type asks students to select the best way of phrasing a whole sentence or a part of one. The other type measures the student's ability to identify, within the context of a particular sentence, flaws in standard written English.

The questions do not test spelling, and only a few deal with problems relating to punctuation — run-on sentences, comma splices, and the like. Although given at the same time and in the same test book as the SAT, the TSWE is a separate examination with a quite different purpose. It is designed to assist colleges in placing their entering students in appropriate English composition courses. This test is not meant to distinguish among students with a better-than-average command of standard written English. Therefore, it has been constructed in such a way that differentiations at the upper end of the score scale are not possible. It is designed, rather, to make useful distinctions at the lower end of the score scale, identifying students who might benefit from special assistance in writing. Although a high score on the test cannot certify that a student has mastered the conventions of standard written English, faculty members can assume that a student receiving a high score does not need remedial help in writing and is probably ready to do the expository writing typically required of college freshmen.

The College Board conducted studies to determine the effectiveness of using the TSWE scores in college placement. With the cooperation of 15 institutions, freshman English course grades and TSWE scores were obtained for over 4,000 students. A comparison of the grades and scores showed a substantial relationship, with over 90 percent of those scoring in the highest score range on the TSWE obtaining either an A or B in regular freshman English courses.

A second study concentrated on the relationship between direct measures of writing ability (essays) and indirect measures (multiple-choice tests) such as the TSWE. Of the highest scoring students (60 -), 85 percent wrote above-average essays at the beginning of an English writing course. These studies and other data obtained in the administration of the test confirm the appropriateness of the TSWE in terms of difficulty and of discriminating power.*

Advanced Placement Program

The AP Program serves three groups: students who wish to pursue college-level studies while still in secondary school, schools that desire to offer these students the opportunity to do so, and colleges that wish to encourage and recognize such achievement. The AP Program annually provides two course descriptions in English, prepared by the Development Committee, to guide secondary schools in offering college-level courses. The course descriptions outline the areas of study in language, composition, and literature that the AP student is expected to know. The booklets *Beginning an Advanced Placement Course in English Language and Composition* and *Beginning an Advanced Placement Course in English Composition and Literature* are available for those planning to initiate AP classes.

Because preparation for the examination involves work equivalent to that of full-year introductory college courses, the Development Committee for AP English recommends that colleges award qualified candidates units of credit commensurate with that achievement and admit them to appropriately advanced courses in composition and or literature. The final decision as to whether or not to grant credit rests with the college, but most colleges grant credit and or appropriate placement to students who have done well on the examinations, usually those receiving grades of 3, 4, and 5. A grade of 1 is low and a grade of 5 is high.

Examination in English Composition and Literature

The composition and literature examination assumes the students' deliberate preparation in college-level English. All the questions in the multiple-choice section are based on passages of poetry or prose provided in the examination. The passages are usually drawn from English and American literature from the Renaissance to the present. The 60-minute multiple-choice section contains sets of questions based on approximately four passages.

In addition to being skilled in reading and analyzing literature, students should be able to write critical and, on occasion, creative essays related to literary topics. The required essay section is graded according to guidelines established by the Chief Reader and the Development Committee for AP English. (The booklet *Grading the Advanced Placement Examination in English Composition and Literature* explains how the examination is read.)

*The studies referred to are: Breland, Hunter M., Conlan, Gertrude C., and Rogosa, David. *A Preliminary Study of the Test of Standard Written English*. Breland, Hunter M. *Group Comparisons for the Test of Standard Written English*, and Breland, Hunter M. *A Study of College English Placement and the Test of Standard Written English*.

Examination in English Language and Composition

An AP Examination in English Language and Composition was first offered in May 1980. The examination assumes careful preparation of students in college-level writing courses. The questions in the multiple-choice section measure a variety of rhetorical and writing skills, beginning with the sentence as the basic syntactic structure and extending to the developed expository composition. Students are called on to recast complete sentences mentally, to answer questions about the structure of expository prose, and to demonstrate their facility with logical statement and rhetorical strategies. About half the questions in the 60-minute multiple-choice section are made up of discrete questions, and the other half are in sets based on given passages of prose.

In addition to being skilled in reading and analyzing exposition, argument, and narrative prose, students also have to be able to plan and write such discourse. In the required essay section, students write on given topics and demonstrate their ability to select the appropriate relationships among author, audience, and subject. The essay section is graded according to guidelines established by the Chief Reader and the Development Committee for AP English.

College-Level Examination Program

CLEP enables both traditional and nontraditional students to earn credit by examination. It provides a means for students to demonstrate college-level achievement without regard to where or how it was acquired. Colleges use the scores as a basis for granting credit, thus enabling students with advanced preparation either to accelerate or enrich their collegiate program of study.

At no cost, the College Board will provide colleges with examinations for standard-setting administrations to aid in the development of appropriate policies for awarding credit on the basis of the CLEP examinations. Any of the College Board Regional Offices can provide further information about this service.

Six examinations of interest to English teachers are offered through CLEP. All six have an essay option. All of the student essays except those for the General Examination in English Composition are sent directly to the institution to which the student is applying for credit and are graded by the faculty of that institution according to its own standards.

General Examination in English Composition

This recently revised examination is offered in 2 editions — 90 minutes of multiple-choice questions or 45 minutes of multiple-choice and a 45-minute essay. The 90-minute multiple-choice edition has been available at all administrations since the fall of 1978. The edition with essay is offered twice a year. See the *CLEP Registration Guide* for the exact dates.

Both editions of the test measure students' writing skills, particularly those skills involved in producing expository essays that follow the conventions of standard written English. Both editions are concerned only with the writing skills that the student is generally expected to use or to acquire in a *freshman* English class. The test does not deal either with knowledge of the technical vocabulary of grammar or rhetoric or with the skills required for research or imaginative writing.

The first 45-minute section of each edition deals primarily with logical and structural relationships within the sentence: subordination and coordination of ideas, parallel structure, placement of modifiers, agreement between parts of a sentence, idiomatic structures, and sentence variety. In addition, some questions ask about the economy, precision, and clarity of the communication. The second section of the all multiple-choice edition of the examination deals mainly with the logical arrangement of ideas and the adaptation of language to purpose and audience. Questions involve sequence of ideas, transitions, coherence of ideas, and appropriateness of evidence.

The second section of the edition with essay consists of a 45-minute essay. Writing an expository essay provides students with a suitable opportunity to demonstrate that they have acquired college-level writing skills. In writing an essay on the topic specified, students are expected to present a point of view, develop an argument logically, and provide supporting evidence.

The essay section and the multiple-choice section are given equal weight in producing a composite score, which is then converted to the CLEP score scale of 200 to 800. Score reports indicate whether the student took the all multiple-choice edition or the edition with essay.

Colleges and teachers desiring to make the edition with essay an ongoing offering in CLEP are urged by the Development Committee to require or advise students, whenever possible, to take the edition with essay.

Subject Examinations in American Literature

The current American Literature examination covers the material usually encountered in a typical one-year college survey course in American literature. Beginning in January 1981, however, this examination will be replaced by two separate examinations, each based on a one-semester course: American Literature I (the Colonial Period to 1870, including Whitman) and American Literature II (1870, including Mark Twain, to the present). Both new examinations, as well as the present one, are primarily tests of knowledge about major literary works — their content, their backgrounds, the authors — and only secondarily tests of the ability to analyze a text closely or to identify various literary techniques and devices. Students are expected to have read the works most frequently covered in surveys of American literature.

About 70 percent of the questions on each of the examinations require knowledge of the content of particular literary works or information about particular

writers, literary movements, or influential critical theories, while approximately 30 percent of the questions are based on passages printed in the test book. Questions might be asked on the characters, plots, settings, or themes of particular works; on authors and influences on authors; on a work's relation to other literary works and to literary traditions; on identification of critical terms, verse forms, and literary devices. The examinations emphasize prose (fiction, essay, autobiography) and poetry. Some drama is included in American Literature II and on the present examination covering all of American literature. The approximate percentages of questions devoted to particular periods on each of the one-semester examinations are as follows:

American Literature I
- The Colonial and Early National Period (1620-1830) 25%
- The Romantic Period (1830-1870, including Whitman) 75%

American Literature II
- Realism (1870-1890) 30%
- Naturalism (1890-1910) 10%
- The Modern Period (1910-1945) 45%
- The Contemporary Period (1945 to the present) 15%

In the optional essay section of each of the examinations, students write on two topics. In one question, they apply a given critical generalization to specified works; in the other question, they discuss a passage supplied in the test book.

Subject Examination in Analysis and Interpretation of Literature

This examination measures comprehension and analysis skills appropriate to a full-year, college-level course in literary analysis. Some acquaintance with terminology and historical development is assumed, but the examination is not primarily a test of factual knowledge. Based on no particular course or syllabus, the examination assumes that the students have read a wide selection of poems, plays, essays, and works of prose fiction. Students are expected to have acquired the habit of attentive and reflective reading of various literary forms from a variety of historical periods.

All the multiple-choice questions are based on passages of poetry, prose, and drama provided in the test. The selections are from American, English, and world literature from the classical period to the present. On the average, each 90-minute edition of the test contains 20 passages of

TABLE 2

CONTENT SPECIFICATIONS FOR MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS OF THE LITERATURE EXAMINATIONS

	Sources of Questions			Chronology				Genre		
	English Literature	American Literature	Other	Classical and Pre-Renaissance	Renaissance and 17th Century	18th and 19th Centuries	20th Century	Poetry	Prose	Drama and Other
ATP Achievement Test in Literature	55-65%	35-45%	5-10%		33⅓%	33⅓%	33⅓%	45%	45%	10%
AP Examination in English Composition and Literature*	50%	50%			35%	25%	40%	50%	50%	
CLEP Subject Examinations in American Literature — Amer. Lit. I†		100%			10%	90%		30%	70%	
CLEP Subject Examinations in American Literature — Amer. Lit. II†		100%				35%	65%	30%	65%	5%
CLEP Subject Examination in Analysis and Interpretation of Literature	67%	30%	3%	5%	25%	40%	30%	40%	40%	20%
CLEP Subject Examination in English Literature	100%			10%	35%	40%	15%	60%	30%	10%

Note: These specifications do not describe any one edition of an examination; they represent what an average edition in each program might be expected to look like.

*The specifications for the multiple-choice questions in the AP Examination in English Composition and Literature vary from year to year because the multiple-choice section and the essay section complement each other.

†These two examinations, each based on a one-semester course, are replacing the examination based on a one-year course in January 1981.

varying lengths, each accompanied by a set of questions. Many sets contain approximately 5 questions, but some have as few as 2 or as many as 10.

In the optional essay section, the student is asked to write two essays, the first analyzing a poem supplied in the test book and the second discussing a particular technique in relation to a novel, story, or play of the student's choosing.

Subject Examination in College Composition

The examination is designed to measure both knowledge of the theoretical aspects of writing usually taught in a traditional two-semester course in composition and the ability to put the principles of standard written English into practice. Those taking the examination are presumed to have engaged in study equivalent to college-level work and to have a knowledge of the fundamental principles of rhetoric and of such elements of language, grammar, and logic as may be useful in formal composition.

Although the student is expected to know some grammatical and rhetorical terms, knowledge of terminology is not emphasized. The examination tests awareness of how particular passages are organized and how ideas have been expressed. Although some types of questions require students to recognize errors in expression, others ask them to combine sentences according to specific directions or to select the most effective of several versions of a sentence. The students, therefore, are required not only to recognize structures needing revision, but also to indicate that they can organize ideas to achieve clarity and effectiveness of expression. The examination covers the following areas:

Sentence (about 30 percent)	Grammar, usage, punctuation
Paragraph and Essay (about 15 percent)	Unity, coherence, sentence variety, organization, shifts in point of view, modes of developing the paragraph
Style (about 30 percent)	Levels of abstraction, figures of speech, tone, conciseness, rhetorical effectiveness, diction, idiom
Logic in Writing (about 10 percent)	Logical fallacies, logical sufficiency, analysis of argument, outlining
English Language, Library Information, Manuscript Format and Documentation (about 15 percent)	History of the language, inflections, derivations, lexicographical descriptions, card catalogs, reference books, dictionaries, footnoting, bibliography

In the belief that judgment of students' actual writing is an essential element in determining whether or not they have satisfactorily completed the equivalent of a college-level composition course, the Development Committee for this examination strongly recommends that institutions encourage students to complete the optional essay section. In the 90-minute essay section, students are given three essay topics and are asked to write on two. The required topic asks them to present a well-organized, reasoned argument; the second essay gives a choice of topics and forms.

Subject Examination in English Literature

Designed to cover the material usually taught in a one-year college survey course in English literature, the test is primarily concerned with major authors and texts, but it also includes some questions on minor writers. An acquaintance with common literary terms and basic literary forms is assumed, as is familiarity with the historical development of English literature. The test would be appropriate for students who have a critical-aesthetic orientation if they have read the standard authors, know the basic periods, and have some sense of the history of English literature.

Many of the multiple-choice questions are discrete; others are in short sets (two to four questions). Approximately half the questions deal with material written before 1800; the other half cover literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Approximately half the questions test knowledge of literary background, identification of authors, content of major works, metrical patterns, and literary references; the other half deal with the skills involved in the reading of poetry, prose, and drama. In the optional essay section, students write a critical essay on material reproduced in the test book and then discuss a given generalization, drawing on their own reading for examples.

Subject Examination in Freshman English

This examination measures skills in reading and writing comparable to those attained by students in an introductory college English course that emphasizes writing compositions in a variety of styles. However, the examination is not a test of skills only. Some attention is paid to the kind of knowledge the student might acquire in an eclectic introductory course dealing with such things as the reading of prose and the writing of pieces in different modes and for different audiences.

The examination measures an individual's ability to recognize and apply principles of good writing. It tests sensitivity in reading and skill in judging and controlling language, on the assumption that these abilities are closely related to candidates' ability to write well. Approximately one-third of the questions on the multiple-choice portion of the examination invite analysis of short passages of prose and poetry, both for comprehension of

content and for judgments about structure and style. Another third is devoted to considerations of style, features of writing that the good reader recognizes and the good writer employs. Questions in this part are on tone and attitude, point of view, metaphor, levels of diction, and suitability of language to a particular audience. In addition, a few questions ask the candidates to reason from the specific to the general and to judge the logical sufficiency of a statement. Still another third of the examination focuses on choosing sentences with clear syntax, correct usage, and, in a few instances, correct punctuation. (The term "correct" refers to writing that follows the dictates of standard written English.) This part of the examination also requires candidates to organize sentences into unified, coherent paragraphs. A few more questions have to do with dictionary and research skills. While the examination as a whole does not require a wide acquaintance with rhetorical and grammatical terminology, some acquaintance is expected.

The Development Committee for this examination strongly recommends that students be required to take the optional essay section. To provide the graders with some basis for judging candidates' flexibility of style and approach, candidates are asked to write on three different questions. These questions ask students to relate a general statement to specific evidence from their own experience. They are not asked to write on large abstract public questions but, instead, on concrete problems that depend on personal knowledge and require the ability to control language.

Comparative Guidance and Placement (CGP) Program

The CGP Program provides a battery of tests for use with students enrolled in community colleges, four-year institutions with open-door admissions policies, and vocational-technical institutes. These tests are designed as aids to placement in both the credit and noncredit courses frequently offered at these institutions. The battery is intended primarily to assist in guiding students in the selection of appropriate educational options and to describe an institution's student body as a whole to administrators making decisions about curriculum.

If data are supplied by a college, the CGP battery can provide forecasts of a student's chances of succeeding in various programs at the college. The CGP tests can be used to predict the likelihood of students' performing above, at, or below average in specific courses in those subjects.

Self-scoring answer sheets are available. By scoring their own tests, students learn immediately how they performed and can relate their scores to the percentile ranks that are provided. The self-scoring answer sheet also indicates the general content of each question and its level of difficulty. Students, teachers, and guidance counselors can thus obtain needed information rapidly and avoid delays in placement.

Of particular interest to English teachers is the Sentences Test (referred to as the Written English Expression Test in the self-scoring mode).

Sentences Test

The Sentences Test has two parts, each composed of 20 multiple-choice questions; the first takes 10 minutes, the second 15. The questions focus on basic writing problems that interfere with communication rather than on subtle problems of style. They measure the ability to deal with written English in the context of particular sentences, not knowledge of rules or theories. The questions require the students to indicate whether or not errors in grammar, usage, choice of words, or idiom have been made. In addition, they treat such writing problems as sentence structure, logical relationships within sentences, and clarity of expression.

The purpose of the Sentences Test is to provide scores that will (1) facilitate placement in English courses, particularly developmental ones, by identifying students needing extensive supplemental work in writing and (2) contribute to predictions of success in subjects requiring competent writing. Except in the self-scoring mode, subscores on the Sentences Test are not reported for individual students, but they are provided in the program summary report for a school's entire student body so that the faculty, once aware of general strengths and weaknesses, can plan appropriate course units.

Descriptive Tests of Language Skills (DTLS)

This series of brief examinations, first made available to colleges on an experimental basis in September 1977, is designed to describe the strengths and weaknesses of beginning college students in reading and writing skills. The results can be used to help individualize instruction, to facilitate placement in remedial courses, and to help colleges develop more effective English programs for their students.

The DTLS are meant to accommodate the current patterns of student competencies, college English courses, registration calendars, and testing schedules by providing flexible testing, scoring, and reporting processes. Each test has two types of answer sheets: one is self-scoring only; the other is both self-scoring and machine scorable. The self-scoring answer sheet, which can be scored by the student or by the faculty, provides immediate information of two kinds: the total number of questions answered correctly, indicating the level of the student's ability in the general skill measured by the test, and separate scores for smaller clusters of questions, indicating particular aspects of the skill with which the student has or does not have difficulty.

During 1977-78, the College Board conducted a pilot project involving a group of two- and four-year public and private institutions of varying sizes and from different geographic locations. The main purpose of this project was to assess how the DTLS could be most effectively used in entry-level English programs. As part of this evaluation, the relation of these multiple-choice tests to essays was examined. A report on this pilot project will be found in the booklet *Guide to the Use of the Descriptive Tests of Language Skills*.

Five examinations (Vocabulary, Usage, Sentence Structure, Logical Relationships, and Reading Comprehension) are available. They may be used individually, in any combination, or as a group, depending on the institution's needs. In addition to a total score, each of these tests (except Vocabulary) provides three or four descriptions (based on clusters of questions within the test) that identify the individual student's strengths and weaknesses in particular aspects of the general skill tested. Three of the tests will be of particular interest to teachers of English composition.

Usage

This test measures how familiar students are with some aspects of standard written English. Students are asked to indicate where, in the sentences provided, errors in writing occur. Neither capitalization nor punctuation nor spelling is tested. The four descriptive clusters derived from this test are pronouns, modifiers, diction and idioms, and verbs.

Sentence Structure

The total score for this test indicates the students' awareness of sentence structure — how parts of a sentence are put together and what makes a sentence complete. Two kinds of multiple-choice questions are used: the first asks the student to select the best of several versions of an underlined part of a sentence; the second asks the student to recast particular sentences according to specific directions. Three descriptive clusters are derived from this test: using complete sentences, using coordination and subordination appropriately, and placing modifiers appropriately.

Logical Relationships

This test measures the student's ability to relate one idea to another logically. Several different types of multiple-choice questions are used. The four descriptive clusters derived from this test are categorizing ideas, using appropriate connectives, making analogies, and recognizing principles of organization.

The booklet *Guide to the Use of the Descriptive Tests of Language Skills* includes suggestions to the teacher about ways to help students correct their weaknesses as well as advice on how to use the information provided by the tests for assessing student strengths and weaknesses, for planning remediation, and for assigning students to different introductory courses. A committee of faculty members with experience in teaching freshman students served as consultants in the development of this guide.

Differences among Examinations

Although the content of a number of the examinations is similar and a question or set of questions in one might fit equally well in another, no two examinations are completely comparable in terms of content, difficulty, or potential use. The differences among the examinations in terms of their intended use and audience can be discerned from the descriptions provided earlier. Internal differences among the examinations are discussed below, first for the examinations in composition and then for the examinations in literature.

Both the ATP Achievement Test in English Composition and the CLEP General Examination in English Composition are sophisticated tests of writing skills, but each uses different types of multiple-choice questions. The ATP Achievement Test in English Composition uses multiple-choice questions that ask students either to recognize inappropriate or unacceptable constructions or to rephrase or recast the sentences of others. These questions ask students to recognize basic problems of grammar and usage, to demonstrate a sensitivity to language, and to choose the best way of phrasing sentences.

The CLEP General Examination in English Composition uses multiple-choice questions that, for the most part, avoid requiring students to search for flaws in writing. The CLEP multiple-choice questions ask students not only to choose the best way of rephrasing sentences, but also to show that they see the logical relationships within and between sentences, that they can arrange ideas logically, that they can recognize the assumptions and biases underlying various statements given, and that they can adapt language to purpose and audience.

Although the TSWE also tests skills in using standard written English, it differs from the ATP Achievement Test in English Composition and the CLEP General Examination in English Composition in important ways. Because the TSWE is considerably shorter than either of the other tests, it cannot test as many kinds of writing skills as they do. The TSWE deals with basic constructions and commonly encountered problems, not highly sophisticated problems and complex structures. An effort has been made to use familiar vocabulary in the test and to restrict the amount of reading required to answer the questions.

In keeping with its purpose of identifying students who might benefit from special assistance in writing, and unlike the ATP Achievement Test and the CLEP test, the TSWE does not measure the higher ranges of ability. Students with well-developed writing skills tend to receive TSWE scores near or at the maximum reported score of 60+. Distinctions among these students can be made by the ATP Achievement Test and the CLEP test, which include more difficult questions.

The CGP Sentences Test is shorter and has significantly fewer questions than either the ATP Achievement Test in English Composition or the CLEP General Examination in English Composition. Because the students for whom the CGP Sentences Test is intended may not be as skilled in expository writing as students who take the ATP Achievement Test or the CLEP test, the Sentences Test measures less sophisticated writing problems. For example, questions testing the ability to recognize sentence fragments are more likely to appear on the CGP test than on the other two examinations.

In general, the TSWE and the CGP Sentences Test are similar in length, content, and purpose. However, the TSWE contains 10 more questions than does the CGP test and emphasizes somewhat different writing problems.

The main purpose of the Descriptive Tests of Language Skills is similar to that of the TSWE and the CGP Sentences Test: to aid colleges and universities in placing their beginning students in appropriate English courses. What distinguishes the Descriptive Tests is the wider variety of language skills tested and the grouping of questions into descriptive clusters from which separate scores are developed. Analysis of student performance on the descriptive clusters will give faculty members information about student strengths and weaknesses in reading and writing skills, information useful in providing appropriate individualized instruction.

The AP Examination in English Language and Composition differs from all other College Board composition examinations chiefly in that it is based on a course description and requires two hours of essay writing. The course description, like introductory college writing courses in general, assumes that the entering student is prepared in the fundamentals of grammar and mechanics and ready for more formal training in the principles of expository writing and the analysis of the various modes of extended discourse: narration, description, argument, and exposition for a variety of purposes. Readings for the course should be models of expository prose suitable both for the analysis of their structure and language and for their usefulness to the students as patterns which may inform their own writing. Although the course is taught to able students at the high school level, the content and the achievement expected are college level.

The course and examination in language and composition differ from the course and examination in composition and literature in both content and focus. Briefly stated, the language and composition course stresses training in the reading and analysis of discursive prose and the writing of expository essays, while the composition and literature course concentrates on the reading and analysis of literary works and the writing of critical essays about literature.

The CLEP Subject Examinations in Freshman English and College Composition are related to particular college courses offered at a wide variety of institutions. Although they evaluate writing ability and, therefore, overlap in content with tests like the Achievement Test in English Composition and the CLEP General Examination in English Composition, they also test material that is not in those tests.

The CLEP Subject Examinations in Freshman English and College Composition differ somewhat in content and emphasis. The Subject Examination in Freshman English reflects an English course that includes skilled composition in varied styles. It emphasizes sensitivity in reading and skill in controlling language. Passages selected as stimulus for reading comprehension and for demonstrating language skill to some extent reflect contemporary issues and concerns.

The Subject Examination in College Composition is based on a more traditional composition course — one which includes rhetorical analysis. Although the questions do not emphasize terminology, they presuppose a greater familiarity with it than do the Freshman English examination questions. The College Composition examination does not emphasize reading comprehension or use verse as stimulus material. Prose passages for analysis are primarily expository and argumentative; they are drawn from a variety of periods and cover a range of subjects.

Like the examinations in composition, the examinations in literature use different types of multiple-choice questions. The five literature examinations use two distinctive kinds of questions:

1. *Questions that test knowledge.* Questions that measure the extent of knowledge are often discrete and cover areas such as literary background; content of major works; chronology; identification of authors, periods, and styles; metrical patterns; literary references.
2. *Questions that test skills.* Questions that measure skills in analyzing and interpreting literature are generally in sets based on passages supplied in the test. The questions cover areas such as understanding figurative language and its effects; recognizing allusions; discerning syntactical relationships; grasping the meaning of words in particular contexts; paraphrasing difficult lines or sentences; perceiving structure and organization; summarizing; drawing inferences and recognizing implications; identifying tone, attitude, and point of view; understanding the effect of using particular words, phrases, structures, or rhetorical devices.

The ATP Achievement Test in Literature, the AP Examination in English Composition and Literature, and the CLEP Subject Examination in Analysis and Interpretation of Literature primarily assess skills in literary analysis; only a few of their multiple-choice questions might require students to demonstrate knowledge of specific authors, styles, or periods.

The CLEP Subject Examinations in American and English Literature, on the other hand, include many questions (75 percent in the American Literature and 45 percent in the English Literature) that assess the extent of a student's reading and knowledge.

The three examinations dealing with literary analysis can be distinguished by their content. The ATP Achievement Test in Literature puts the least emphasis on knowledge of literary terminology. In an effort to be fair to students with varying background and preparation, the ATP Development Committee has recommended that only the most basic terms — "speaker," "tone," "image," and the like — be used in the questions. The AP and CLEP examinations assume a greater familiarity with terminology, although neither examination relies heavily on such knowledge. A further difference is that the Achievement Test defines "literature" rather broadly. Questions are occasionally related to materials such as cartoons and jokes, for example.

Although almost all the passages and questions in the ATP Achievement Test in Literature are appropriate in level and in type for the other two examinations, not all the passages and questions in the AP Examination in Composition and Literature or the CLEP Analysis and Interpretation of Literature Examination could be used interchangeably. Nor can they be used interchangeably with the passages and questions in the Achievement Test in Literature. The AP Examination, for example, often includes longer and more complex passages and asks more questions about them. The CLEP examination sometimes uses passages from literary criticism or from pre-Renaissance literature; such passages would probably not be selected for the other examinations.

Some information is available on the relative level of difficulty of the three examinations. A study investigating performance on the ATP Achievement Test in Literature and the CLEP Subject Examination in Analysis and Interpretation of Literature shows that a selected group of CLEP questions is appropriate for students taking the Achievement Test and that these questions are of approximately equal difficulty for the two candidate groups. Although the examinations differ in content, the skills of the two candidate groups appear roughly equivalent. A similar study indicated that questions from the CLEP Subject Examination in Analysis and Interpretation of Literature were less difficult for the AP students tested than for the college students used in the CLEP norming group.

Of the three literature examinations, only the AP Examination requires students to write essays. Although most of the AP essay questions ask students to write on literary topics, writing ability is taken into account when the essay questions are graded. The course description for AP English gives equal emphasis to the section on composition and the section on literature. This emphasis on writing ability indicates the Development Committee's expectation that students who receive high grades on the AP Examination will be skilled in composition as well as in literary analysis.

TABLE 3

COMPARATIVE TEST DATA

	Score Scale	Mean	Standard Deviation	Reliability[a]	Standard Error of Measurement	Percentage Completing 75% of Test
ATP Achievement Test						
in English Composition[b]	200-800	511	102	.88	28	96.5
in Literature[b]	200-800	529	109	.91	34	99.2
ATP Test of Standard Written English	20-60	44.2	10.4	.88	3.8	95.8
AP Examination in English Composition and Literature						
Multiple-choice	—	—	—	.815	—	99.4
Essay	—	—	—	.65-.80	—	—
Composite	1-5	3.1	1.0	.80-.86	6.4-7.8[c]	—
AP Examination in English Language and Composition						
Multiple-choice	—	—	—	.842	—	99.6
Essay	—	—	—	.65-.80	—	—
Composite	1-5	3.1	1.1	.81-.88	6.2-7.7[c]	—
CLEP General Examination in English Composition[d]	200-800	500	100	.94	5.9	63.6
CLEP General Examination in English Composition with Essay[e]						
Multiple-choice	—	—	—	.88	4.0	74.2
Essay	—	—	—	—	—	—
Composite	200-800	574	94	—	—	—
CLEP Subject Examination in American Literature[f]	20-80	50	10	.91	3.1	100 for each section
in Analysis and Interpretation of Literature[g]	20-80	46	10	.89	3.6	92.1 Section 1 96.0 Section 2
in College Composition[h]	20-80	50	10	.92	2.8	99.6 Section 1 94.0 Section 2
in English Literature[i]	20-80	50	10	.91	3.0	100 for each section
in Freshman English[j]	20-80	50	10	.92	2.9	92.6 Section 1 96.2 Section 2
CGP Sentences Test[k]	20-80	49	10	.83	3.9	98.3 Section 1 98.4 Section 2
Descriptive Tests of Language Skills[l]						
Usage	1-25	16.0	5.6	.85	2.1	99.8
Sentence Structure	1-25	15.9	5.6	.83	2.3	99.1
Logical Relationships	1-25	16.3	5.6	.88	1.9	99.8

Note: A particular score does not represent the same level of performance across examinations and testing programs. For example, a score of 480 on the ATP Achievement Test in English Composition does not necessarily represent the same level of performance as a score of 480 on the CLEP General Examination in English Composition.

[a] The figures for CLEP and ATP are typical of the reliabilities of the several editions of each test. The AP figures are for one recent edition of the examination.

[b] Data are based on the December 1978 equating administration.

[c] For composite raw scores of an edition of the test with a maximum possible composite raw score of 150.

[d] Data are based on the spring 1978 scaling administration of the all multiple-choice version of this examination participated in by 1,170 college students completing a one-year course in English composition.

[e] Data are based on 623 candidates who took this version of the examination in the spring 1978 administration. Data reported in the last three columns are for the multiple-choice section only.

[f] Data are based on the spring 1971 scaling administration; participated in by 659 college students completing a one-year course in American literature.

[g] Data are based on the spring 1972 equating administration; participated in by 1,195 college students completing a course in analysis and interpretation of literature.

[h] Data are based on the spring 1976 scaling administration; participated in by 5,483 college students completing a one-year course in English composition.

[i] Data are based on the spring 1970 scaling administration; participated in by 454 college students completing a one-year course in English literature.

[j] Data are based on the spring 1972 scaling administration; participated in by 7,873 college students completing a one-year course in freshman English.

[k] Data are based on a sample drawn from the 1976-77 and 1977-78 testing year files.

[l] Data are based on freshmen at 18 participating colleges.

Glossary

Discrete Questions: Single test questions that are unconnected to other questions on the examination

Mean: The average

Reliability: The consistency of the grade or score that candidates would receive if they were to repeat the examination (usually expressed as a correlation coefficient)

Scaled Score: A score to which a raw score is converted for reasons of convenience, comparability, and ease of interpretation

Set: A number of questions based on common stimulus material

Standard Deviation: A measure of the spread (extent of variability) of a set of scores around their mean. The less the spread, the smaller the standard deviation

Standard Error of Measurement: An indication of the extent of the error inherent in an obtained score because of the imperfect reliability of a test. It indicates (in score units of the test) the range of discrepancy between the true score and the obtained score.

Standard Written English: The language that students are generally expected to use in papers that they write for college assignments and the language that is used in most college textbooks

True Score: The score a student would earn if a test could measure ability perfectly

Advisory Committee on English 1979-80

Michael J. Mendelsohn, University of Tampa, Tampa, Florida, *Chairman*
Donald E. Billiar, Union College, Cranford, New Jersey
Diana Culbertson, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio
Eileen E. Lothamer, California State University, Long Beach, California
Jesse Perry, San Diego City Schools, San Diego, California
Meredith Price, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts
Ruth F. Smith, Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York

ETS Consultants: Gertrude C. Conlan
Robert J. Jones

Note: Requests for information about the use of a program should be directed to your College Board Regional Office. Specific questions about any of the English examinations may be addressed to the ETS consultants listed above, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey 08541.